From: evilpaul13
To: Microsoft ATR
Date: 1/10/02 2:13pm
Subject: Microsoft Settlement

Honorable Members of the US Senate Judiciary Committee,

   I have been following the Microsoft case reasonably closely. Based on what I've read from the testimony before the committee, I do not believe that the proposed punishment is fitting or effective. Because Microsoft has acted unfairly against competition, and price gouged consumers I believe the proposed remedy should reciprocate. Microsoft's competition should receive a indirect boon, and consumers should be repaid in some way.

   So, I propose that Microsoft pay 20 billion back to consumers split two ways. First, 8 billion should be put into Social Security. Many of the consumers Microsoft gouged will one day hope to collect SS, and every little bit helps. 12 billion should be put into education and schools. I propose that it be distributed by state according to population. In the individual states, 80% of the money should be given to the bottom 33% of schools and 20% to the 17% above the bottom third. With the condition, that not a penny of that money be spent on Microsoft products.

   This is how Microsoft will compensate its competitor's for its unfair business practices. By not using Microsoft products, schools will use its competitors. I attended public schools, and based on my experience with their systems, there is little to nothing that is done on their computers that a competing product does not do just as well as its more expenisve Microsoft version.

Linux is a operating system that could easily replace Windows on school servers. And on desktops too. Contrary to what Microsoft might have you believe there is no shortage of quality software available FREE OF CHARGE. Two of the most popular and easy to use are Redhat Linux (their CEO testified if I recall correctly) and Mandrake Linux. Mandrake is as easy to install as Windows 98.

Sun Microsystem's Star Office is a FREE full featured office software suite, with nearly identical menus and identical functionality to Microsoft Office.

Netscape has a web browser that works as well as Internet Explorer. All Linux distributions have several to choose from including Mozilla (what Netscape is based on), the KDE project's Konqueror, and Galeon. All three are high performance and stable web browsers.

There is a graphics manipulation and creation program called "The Gimp" also available free of charge with most Linux distributions. Adobe Software also offers world class graphics software used by professionals everyday. This is also a place where schools could consider Apple iMacs which are known for

their strength in graphics.

It is very important to remember that while Microsoft's proponents will claim that while free Linux has a higher total cost of ownership, this is simply a falsehood. Schools will need a "computer guy" no matter what type of systems they run. Additionally, "Windows was built for the Internet" while UNIX-like operating systems such as Linux "Built the Internet." So, networking is very much a part of Linux systems and they are more easily (and without expensive addons) administered to remotely.

A default installation of Linux is also far more secure than a default installation of Windows. Having used Windows in school, I can attest to the amount of downtime computers had caused by their frequent infection by Windows viruses and by malicious hacker-wannabes. Under Linux, a person logged on cannot delete critical files which would crash the computer or change settings that would crash the computer. Windows viruses like Code Red, Sircam, Nimda, and every other of the dozens of Windows viruses that make the headlines every year simply will not work on Linux.

I hope the committee will read and consider my proposal, as I whole heartedly believe it will be a more effective punishment for past transgressions, and send the message that future abuse will not be tolerated.

Sincerely,

Paul Dougherty IV
Resident of Media, Pennsylvania
Computer Science Student